Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1550 - April 27, 2007

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1550 with a
release date of Friday, April 27th, 2007 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Hams down-under
prepare to face another BPL trial as radio
amateurs in the United States North East respond
as the skies open up. Find out the details on
Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1550 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: ANOTHER BPL TRIAL DOWN-UNDER

Another BPL trial has been announced in
Australia. If this one proves out it could grow
into one of the biggest access BPL installations
down-under and be a major problems for that
nations hams. Felix Scerri, VK4FUQ, is in New
South Whales not far from where the test will be run:

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Full details have now emerged about the latest
BPL trial in Queanbeyan, NSW. The trial was
announced by Country Energy on the 15th March and
is expected to be operational for at least 6 months from May this year.

The BPL trial plans to pass 300 households in the
Queanbeyan CBD and Jerrabomberra areas, and will
provide both access broadband and electricity network management
 information.

Freshtel will provide an Internet Telephony
service to participating customers who, in
addition to receiving a modem and access to the
broadband service, will receive a free Binatone
cordless phone and $30 per month of Freshtel call
credit. Country Energy have been "trialling" BPL
in Queanbeyan for several years using the older
generation 45Mb/s DS2 chipset based Mitsubitishi
equipment, producing emission levels
measured up to 55dB above the expected ambient
noise levels on the 7MHz amateur band. This new
trial will use Schneider Electric (Ilevo)
equipment using the later generation 200Mb/s chipset, as used in the Mt
Beauty BPL trial.

Country Energy, which is owned by the NSW State
Government, has around 195,000 kilometres of
powerlines and 1.4 million power poles, and
offers retail electricity in five states and

territories. It employs more than 3,900 employees serving more than 870,000 customers.

I'm Felix, VK4FUQ

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The results of this latest Australian BPL trial hopefully will be known by the end of the year. (WIA News)

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RESCUE RADIO: THE GREAT NOR'EASTER OF APRIL 2007

The weekend of April 14th were a couple of dark days for the North East. That's when the worst rainstorm in over 100 years hit the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and then worked its way up into New England. And in many cases hams associated with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service were called out as city's and towns prepared to face Mother Natures wrath. No place was the pre planning more apparent that in the New York City and Long Island areas. Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, is the areas Section Emergency Coordinator:

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Lisenco: "At 8 a.m., New York City ARES was asked to staff 9 shelters. The District Emergency Coordinator for New York City, John Healy, KA2ABV, got in touch with his 5 Emergency Coordinators -- one for each Borough -- and within the city they were able to staff for the next 24 hours the 9 shelters. They actually put together a staff of about 30 people working in shifts throughout the day."

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As the storm intensified, over 8 inches of rain fell in New York City. As luck would have it, the expected 50 mph wind gusts did not materialize and the danger to the City passed by midnight. At that time, New York City District ARES was able to stand down and secure.

In Nassau County New York the District Emergency Coordinator Jim Mezey, W2KFV. He said that Nassau ARES ramped up for the storm on with a check of its communication systems at the Nassau Red Cross Chapter. Members were asked to double check their equipment and make sure their "Go Bags" were ready. Rain totals were three to five inches in Nassau County and wind speeds estimates were up to 40 mph sustained with higher gusts. There was a good amount of coastal flooding

causing roadway damage and many trees came down. There were also scattered power outages but normal communications were not interrupted.

But New Jersey and upstate New York were not as lucky. According to Lisenco, there was some fairly severe damage in those regions:

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Lisenco: "Unfortunately, New Jersey and some of the counties in upstate New York were hit very hard with flooding. In fact a number of people were displaced in those regions and the (ham radio) operations was ongoing for a number of days."

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Meantime, the ARRL Letter reports that in Massachusetts winds gusting between 60 and 75 MPH brought down trees and power lines, leaving some 45,000 customers without power. Trees and tree limbs also fell on cars and houses, in some instances causing significant damage.

During the storm, SKYWARN operations at the Taunton Ntional Weather Service office's WX1BOX, were active from 8 AM Sunday through midnight Tuesday. The SKYWARN team provided some 500 to 600 reports of snowfall, rainfall, flooding, wind damage and wind-speed measurements. More than a dozen repeaters served as formal and informal SKYWARN gathering spots.

Meantime, at the Massachusetts State Emergency Operations Center, RACES' was activated from 6 PM Sunday through 7 PM Monday. Mot only were they monitoring the storm but the Boston Marathon as well. That race went on despite the rough weather with over 200 Amateur Radio volunteers deployed to keep it moving along. Even as Eastern Massachusetts ARES went on standby to support storm related operations.

Similar support operations were also reported in portions of Connecticut, New Hampshire and adjoining states. (NYC ARES, ARRL, ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: KE7KDP RETURNS TO EARTH

Space tourist Charles Simonyi, KE7KDP, and two members of the Expedition 14 crew have returned to Earth. Dr. Simonyi along with Expedition 14 Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria, KE5GTK, and Flight Engineer Mikhail Tyurin, RZ3FT, landed safely southwest of Karaganda in Kazakhstan at

8:31 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Saturday, April 21st.

The world's fifth space tourist paid around $25 million for pre-flight training and his scheduled 14 day stay on the International Space Station. During his time on-orbit he took to the airwaves using the NA1SS station and made numerous individual and school contacts like these:

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Actual Contact Audio - Hear it in the audio version of this newscast downloadable at www.arnewsline.org

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The return to Earth of the Expedition 14 crew members was originally scheduled for Friday, April 20th. Inclement weather at the primary landing site meant the date and location had to be changed. This effectively gave KE7KDP a free extra day in space.

After landing, KE7KDP was quoted as saying that it had been a terrific trip and that he felt fine. Russian space chief Anatoly Perminov echoed those remarks by saying that all three of the returning space travelers were feeling well but Dr. Simonyi clearly feels the best of all. Welcome home. (ARNewsline and various published reports.)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ISS AUTOMATIC PACKET REMAINS IN LIMBO

The automated ham radio packet system on board the International Space Station will remain in a state of limbo for a while longer. The ARISS control team had been hopeful that space tourist Charles Simonyi, KE7KDP, would have been able to restore the Kenwood radio system to full functionality after an accidental reprogramming of the radio occurred near the end of Expedition 13.

To accomplish this, the ARISS team worked with the Simonyi people to get him prepared to perform the Kenwood reprogramming. Unfortunately, a few weeks before the launch it was learned that additional software certification steps were required to allow the reprogramming software to be used on the I-SS computers. This certification was completed only a few days before KE7KDP returned from space. As a result, there was insufficient time for him to complete the restoration.

The ARISS team says that at this point in time, it appears as if a full restoration will require

a concerted effort with full cooperation from the Russian and US space agencies. This will likely take several months to accomplish. In the meantime, requests for some investigative analysis by the crew will be made. This will enable the ARISS team to determine if the radio can be partially restored to provide some of the unattended operations that it once provided. (ARISS)

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BREAK 1

Celebrating our 30th year of service to the worlds Amateur Radio community. From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the WB2DRK repeater serving Suffolk county, New York.

(5 sec pause here)

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REGULATORY NEWS: FCC PROPOSES TO LOWER THE VANITY CALL FEE

Some good news about license fees courtesy of the ARRL. It reports that the FCC has proposed reducing the regulatory fee to obtain or retain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign by more than 40 percent starting later this year.

In a Notice of Proposed Rule Making released April 18th, the Commission is proposing to cut the fee from its current $20.80 to $11.70. If ultimately adopted, that would mark the lowest fee in the history of the current vanity call sign program.

The actual designation of the proposal is titled "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2007." In it, the FCC proposes to collect a total nearly $290.3 million in Fiscal Year 2007 from all of its combined regulatory fees. (ARRL)

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ENFORCEMENT: UNLICENSED TAMPA BROADCASTER FINED $10000

Turning to enforcement news, the FCC has fined Jean-Harry Pierre-Francois $10,000 for operating an unlicensed broadcast transmitter in the Tampa, Florida area. Back on February 13th the Commission's Tampa Office of the Enforcement Bureau issued Pierre-Francois a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture in the amount of $10,000. Pierre-Francois never filed a

response to the N-A-L. The FCC has now affirmed the forfeiture making it a fine that has to be paid within 30 days of the April 23rd release date unless Pierre-Francois decides to file an appeal. (FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: IARU EMCOMMS PRESENTATION AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

A report developed by the Regional Conference on Disaster Relief and Management is now available for on-line viewing. The Power Point presentation is from an address given by the IARU Region 1 Emergency Communications Coordinator Seppo Sisatto, OH1VR.

The conference was held April 14th to thr 16th in Alexandria, Egypt. The report is on-line at www.iaru-1.org/Alexandria%20presentation.ppt (IARU Region 1 News via Southgate News)

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RADIO LAW: COMPANY SUES FCC IN BID TO LEGALIZE SALE OF FREQUENCY JAMMERS

Cell Antenna Corporation, of Florida has filed suit against the FCC claiming rules that prohibit the sale of radio frequency jamming devices to state and local governments impair first responders' ability to fight terrorism. The suit, filed in the US District Court of the Southern District of Florida challenges a law enforced by the Federal Communications Commission to prohibit the use of cellular and radio frequency jamming equipment by state and local governments.

Cell Antenna argues that several sections of the Communications Act of 1934 violate the 14th amendment of the Constitution and conflict with both the public interest and the wishes of Congress. Additionally, the suit claims that the FCC rules put at risk the lives of first responders and the public in the event of a terrorist attack using a remote controlled improvised explosive device.

In support of its argument, Cell Antenna claims that with increasing regularity, insurgent groups in Iraq and terrorist cells abroad have begun to turn to cellular-triggered explosives as a means of attacking civilian and military targets. The company says that the FCC is responsible for the commercial licensing of radio waves, and should not be responsible for the determination of whether state and local officials can use technology to fight terrorism.

It should be noted that one of Cell Antennas

primary products is signal jamming devices that
are sold to federal government agencies
throughout the world. The complete press release
detailing this law suit is on line at
http://cellantenna.com/pressreleases/CellAntenna-FCC4.pdf
(CGC, Cell Antenna Website)

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ON THE AIR: HAM RADIO INVITED ON CROSS COUNTRY PATRIOTIC RIDE

A 15-day Patriotic Ride Across America is being
planned as part of the May 2007 National Military
Appreciation Month. Organizers would like
Amateur Radio support for communications along the route.

The 6000 mile round trip ride begins on May 20th
in Sacramento, California and goes cross country
to Washington D.C. before returning to the
California state capital. More information is
on-line at www.nmam.org. Just click on the
Capital Ride Across America graphic at the top of the page.

Also, as reported last week, the next "Ham It Up
For The Troops" operating event takes on May 26,
beginning at 9 a.m. Eastern time . Its also a
part of National Military Appreciation Month but
sponsored by the Amateur Radio Military Appreciation Day organization.

ARMAD as it is better known has conducted this
special event for the past three years. It's
primary purpose is to let those that sacrifice
know that we support them. More about ARMAD and
the "Ham It Up For The Troops" event is on line at www.armad.net (ARMAD)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: NEW MANAGING EDITOR AT RADCOM

Some names in the news. First to the United
Kingdom where Giles Read, G1MFG, has been named
Managing Editor of Radio Communications
Magazine. He succeeds Alex Kearns who left the magazine back in January.

Read previously served as Rad Com's Technical
Editor. In his new position, G1MFG will be
responsible for overall editorial control and
technical content of the monthly U-K publication.

The RSGB which publishes Rad Com has also
announced that Tracey Treanor has joined the
staff. She is taking on the job in bringing to
members the most up to date news as well as in-depth features. (GB2RS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: ASTRONAUT BILL MC ARTHUR TO BE AT HAMVENTION 2007

Back on this side of the Atlantic, the Dayton Hamvention and ARRL have announced that Space shuttle veteran and International Space Station Expedition 12 commander Bill McArthur, KC5ACR, will be attending the 2007 Dayton Hamvention.

McArthur will be the League's guest Hamvention. He will first be the featured speaker during a private ARRL reception on Thursday, May 17th. He will be on hand all day Friday, May 18th to greet and talk with visitors to ARRL EXPO 2007 area at the Hamvention.

Hamvention 2007 takes place May 18th to the 20th at Hara Arena near Dayton, Ohio. More about the event and what's happening this year is on-line at www.hamvention.org. (Dayton Hamvention, ARRL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: SAARO TURNS 20 IN MAY

And congratulations to the Salem Area Amateur Radio Operators club of Salem, Ohio, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in May. The group describes itself as an association of radio amateurs organized for the promotion of amateur radio communication and experimentation that provides communications during disasters, emergencies and community events.

The club has about 30 members from Salem and the surrounding area. It is usually in attendance at large public functions like parades and works with the Patriotic Society on Memorial Day. The club has assisted in many emergency operations over the years, and has gained national recognition as a Special Service Club. It's well-known for its 24-foot long red trailer that appears during emergencies and emergency drills throughout the area.   (SalemNews.net)

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BREAK 2

Thirty years and still going. From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO NEEDED: HAM RADIO STILL DOMINANT

Radio in general is still one of the most dominant form of communication despite major technological advancements. This, according to the International Amateur Radio Union.

Commenting, Graham Hartlett, ZS6GJH, of the South African Radio League notes that despite the internet and cellular phones, Amateur Radio continues to attract people world-wide. Hartlet says that it does this by providing free international communications and friendships and because ham radio does not need pre-established supporting infrastructure that all other services do. (SARL)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: ELSEEMORE HELPS BLIND OPS USE ECHOLINK

Australia's NERG News reports a program called ElseeMore - EchoLink for Blind Operators has been developed by Tony Wakefield, VK3ZTR. This program assists Blind and Visually Impaired radio amateurs in operating the popular EchoLink Internet linking program.

Normally EchoLink requires the use of the keyboard and mouse, and the ability to read menus and text displays. ElseeMore is simplifying the user interface. Large screen fonts and simplified text displays can be used by partially sighted operators, while voice prompts are use by totally blind operators to navigate through the EchoLink controls. Amnd best of all, ElseeMore can be configured by either locally or over the Internet so that the blind operator can easily access pre-set favorite EchoLink nodes.

According to its developer, ElseeMore the program has been quite popular not only with blind operators but also operators having 20-20 vision. They find the large font display and speech announcements are great for monitoring operations from across a room. More is on-line at www.tonywakefield.com.au (WIA News)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD INTERNET ACCESS

The U.S. Department of Defense has named Intelsat General Corp. to proceed with initial testing of what is expected to lead to Internet Routing in Space. In early 2009, a space-hardened Cisco router will be launched into geostationary orbit

to support the voice, data and video needs of the armed forces, first responders, and others who need seamless and instant communications. You can read more about it at www.telecomweb.com/tnd/22650.html (CGC)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AMSAT-NA SPACE SYMPOSIUM IN PITTSBURG OCT 26 - 28

The 2007 AMSAT-NA Space Symposium will be held at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriott Hotel from October 26 through the 28th. This years keynote speaker is Sy Liebergot, a former NASA spaceflight controller and part of the team that guided Apollo 13 back to Earth following the explosion which crippled the spacecraft.

AMSAT is also focusing efforts to attract local middle and high school students to the Saturday sessions by providing special programs. As part of this there will be a fully operational satellite station on site for demonstrations and use.

This years symposium is being hosted by the Wireless Association of South Hills Amateur Radio Club. More information is on-line on the symposium page at www.amsat.org (AMSAT)

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WORLDBEAT - AUSTRALIA: 6 METER BEACON BACK ON AIR

In nrews from around the worls, word that the Australian 6 meter propagation beacon on 50.295 MHz is back on air. This, with a 10 watt horizontally polarized omni-directional CW signal.

The VK3RMH beacon was established to provide signals to indicate band openings to and across V-K land. It also provides signals necessary for receiver alignment of stations within its local groundwave coverage area. (WIA News)

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WORLDBEAT - CHINA: THE INTERLOPERS ARE BACK

If you are trying to hold a QSO on the 17 meter band and you are suddenly trampled by two shortwave stations fighting one another then you have been jammed by a pair of broadcasters vying for the minds of the people of China. More accurately, one is trying to express its views to listeners in the Peoples Republic of China while the other is trying to jam it out. No matter as neither the "Sound of Hope" which broadcasts from

Taiwan nor the music station jamming it from the city of Hainan are supposed to be on 18.160 MHz nor anywhere in the Amateur exclusive world wide 18 MHz allocation. But they are and its not the first time that either has showed up in an Amateur Radio allocation. And while several nations Intruder Watch operations have logged the stations and complaints have been filed, it remains to be seen if anything can be done to chase the interlopers away. (RN, Listener E-Mail)

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ON THE AIR: THE IARU REGION 1 EMCOMM PARTY - MAY 5

On the air, word that Region 1 of the International Amateur Radio Union will be sponsoring its second EmCom Party on the Air on Sunday May 5th. The IARU says that this is not a contest but an emergency communications exercise. The aim for participants is to contact I-A-R-U Region 1 headquarters station OF3F in Finland and also as many other national HQ and emergency communication group stations as possible using SSB. The information gathered will give the sponsor a good idea as to range and accessibility of stations in the region.

The event runs from 11.00 to 15.00 UTC on the 40, 20 and 15 meter bands. More information on the exercise can be obtained at www.raynet-hf.net. (GB2RS)

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DX

In D-X, the international N8S DXpedition to Swains Island led by Hrane Miloshevic,YT1AD of Serbia and David Collingham, K3LP of the USA, is over. Radio Bulgaria reports that racked up a a record breaking 117,205 QSO's by operating around the clock on all bands from April 3rd to the 15th. QSL cards is due to start after May 15th. Direct QSL's require a self-addressed return envelope and proper funds to cover return postage. Those go to Hrane Miloshevic, YT1AD, 36206 Vitanovac, Serbia. QSL's sent via the bureau require only your card.

On the air, keep your ears open for DL9MWG active from Malta as 9H3RT through May 11th. Activity will be on HF mainly using CW. QSL to DL9MWG at his callbook address.

Last but by no means least, word that DS4DRE, is currently active slash 4 from Hong Island. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters on CW and SSB. He plans to be there until June 30th. QSL as directed on the air.

(Above from various DX news outlets)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: ITS T-HUNT TIME

And finally this week, as the weather warms up, it's time to think about taking ham radio outside. Newsline's Joe Moell K0OV tells about some opportunities for foxhunting fun in the coming months.

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It's going to be a busy spring and summer for fans of hidden transmitter hunting. May 12 and 13 is the annual CQ Worldwide Foxhunting Weekend. You may have heard me call it the National Foxhunting Weekend before, but the name has changed because it's become an international event. Fans of direction-finding contests will take to the roads and to the forest to track down hidden transmitters on two meters, and other bands too, in cars and on foot. Start planning a Foxhunting Weekend activity for your club. You can get some ideas by reading about it in the April and May issues of CQ Magazine.

Then a week later, a very special foxhunting event takes place at Sinclair Park in Dayton on the Sunday of Hamvention 2007. This will be the first ARDF event just for the blind to be held in the USA. It's being put on by the OH-KY-IN Amateur Radio Club, headed up by Dick Arnett WB4SUV and Bob Frey WA6EZV. Anyone who is blind or sight-impaired can participate; no ham radio license is required. How can one walk or run through a park to find radio transmitters without being able to see? Go to OH-KY-IN's special Web site to find out. The URL is www.ardfusa.com

While you're at the Hamvention, be sure to take in the Foxhunt Forum, which will be Saturday at 1145 hours in Room 5 of Hara Arena.

The big finish for 2007 foxhunting activity will be the ARDF Championships of the USA and IARU Region 2, which will be September 14 through 16 in the forest near South Lake Tahoe, California. That's near the Nevada border in the Sierras. The championships are open to anyone of any age, and even if you've never done this sort of thing before, it's a chance to learn from the best. Registration will open soon. Read all about it, and other foxhunting news, at www.homingin.com. Spell HOMINGIN as one word.

From southern California, this is Joe Moell K-zero-Oscar-Vicror for Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Again, Joes website is www.homingin.com. (K0OV, ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Two reminders before we go. First about our on-line poll regarding your position on the concept of Regulation by Bandwidth. To take part, take your web browser to www.arnewsline.org. Scroll down and watch for the word "Polls" on the left hand side of the page. Then click on the box that is closest to your view. As soon as you cast your vote you will see the current results.

Also, the nominating season for this years Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open. Any radio amateur age 18 or younger residing in all 50 United States, plus Puerto Rico and all 13 Canadian Provinces can qualify. Full details and nominating forms are on our special website at www,yhoty.org. Also see the Vertex-Standard sponsored ad on page 8 of the March issue of QST Magazine.

And this final word. It was 1,550 weeks ago, in the summer of 1977 that the Amateur Radio Newsline was born. That was almost 30 years ago and back then, we called ourselves the Westlink Radio Network with our very first newscast dedicated to reporting on repeater deregulation. That was a hot topic back then and there have been hundreds if not thousands of hot topics since. And as we end our third decade of service and head toward our fourth, we want to pause for a moment and say thanks to all of you who have listed to us all these years and who have given us the financial support so that we can continue.

In reality, you are just as important as any of us because without you the listener, we would have no reason to exist. And as we say goodbye for this week we renew our pledge first made 30 years ago to do our best to bring you the most timely and up to date information that you need to be a modern day radio amateur.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 from all of us here at the Amateur Radio Newsline and we thank you for listening.

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